

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
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AGRE-00 HEW-04 CU-04 /104 W  
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R 211759Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6973  
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN  
AMXBASSY BERLIN 0988  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BONN 05178

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, BQG  
SUBJECT: BRAEUTIGAM'S COMMENTS ON INNER-GERMAN  
RELATIONS AND BERLIN

SUMMARY: IN A CONVERSATION ON MARCH 20, BRAEUTIGAM OF  
TY CHANCELLERY SAID OHE GDR HAD RETURNED ITS RELATIONS  
WITH THE FRG TO NORMAL FOLLOWING THE REACTION TO THE  
"SPIEGEL" MANIFESTO, ETC. EARLIER THIS YEAR. HE SAID THE  
GDR IS PREPARED TO CONTINUE SLOW PROGRESS (WITH-  
OUT MAJOR ADVANCES) IN FRG/GDR RELATIONS AND WISHES NO  
GREAT DIFFICULTIES.

ON THE INTERNAL GDR SITUATION, HE DISCOUNTED  
PRESS REPORTS OF A STOPH/HONECKER STRUGGLE FOR POWER  
AND EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT HONECKER IS SECURE. HE  
DISCUSSED THE USE OF WEST MARKS IN THE GDR AND THE  
INTERSHOP SYSTEM IN FAMILIAR TERMS.

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REGARDING THE SOVIETS AND BERLIN, HE SAID THERE  
APPEARS TO BE A HARSHER TONE IN RECENT SOVIET PROTESTS  
BUT DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE ADOPTING A  
HARDER LINE ON BERLIN ALTHOUGH THEY MAY BE LESS  
CONCILIATORY SINCE THE SOVIETS HAVE APPARENTLY GIVEN  
UP THE HOPE FOR A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FRG.

HE CITED THE BERLIN/EC RELATIONSHIP AS ONE WHICH COULD  
CREATE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS WITH THE SOVIETS. ON THE  
WHOLE, HE IS RELAXED ABOUT SOVIET POLICY ON BERLIN.

REGARDING BREZHNEV HE SAID THE FRG CONTINUES TO  
BELIEVE A VISIT TO THE FRG IS POSSIBLE IN THE NEAR  
FUTURE.

HE AGREED WITH EMBOFF'S ASSESSMENT THAT BONN  
GROUP COORDINATION HAD VASTLY IMPROVED DURING RECENT  
MONTHS AND EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE THE FRG ATTACHES TO  
FRG/ALLIED CONSENSUS.

FINALLY, BRAEUTIGAM SAID THE PROPOSED GDR/US  
CONSULAR CONVENTION IS ANEXTREMELY IMPORTANT QUESTION  
FOR THE FRG AND, WHILE THE FRG IS NOT SEEKING TO LIMIT  
US FLEXIBILITY, IT IS INTENSELY INTERESTED IN THE  
NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY

1. CHESTER OF EUR/CE, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFF, CALLED  
ON MANS BRAEUTIGAM, HEAD OF THE CHANCELLERY WORKING  
GROUP ON INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS, ON MARCH 20. THE  
FOLLOWING TOPICS WERE COVERED DURING THE DISCUSSION.

FRG/GDR RELATIONS

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2. ASKED ABOUT THE PRESENT STATE OF INNER-GERMAN RELA-  
TIONS, BRAEUTIGAM SAID THAT THE GDR ATTITUDE APPEARS TO  
BE ONE OF NO MAJOR ADVANCES BUT NO GREAT TROUBLE EITHER.  
HE RECALLED THE EVENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR,  
THE PUBLICATION OF THE EAST GERMAN MANIFESTO IN "DER  
SPIEGEL" AND THE TURNBACK OF CDU PARTY CHIEF KOHL IN  
EAST BERLIN, AND SAID THAT THE GDR IN THE MEANTIME  
APPEARS PREPARED TO MOVE FORWARD AGAIN AT A MEASURED  
PACE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE FRG. HE CITED SEVERAL  
FACTORS AS POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THIS CHANGE IN THE  
GDR ATTITUDE. FIRST, THE FRG CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT  
A BREZHNEV VISIT IS POSSIBLE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IT  
IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE CERTAIN OF SUCH A VISIT BUT IT  
MAY BE ANNOUNCED ON SHORT NOTICE. BECAUSE OF THE  
UNCERTAIN STATE OF BREZHNEV'S HEALTH, THE SOVIETS ARE  
UNABLE TO GIVE AS MUCH AS SIX WEEKS' NOTICE OF THE  
PLANNED TRIP. IN ANY CASE, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF A  
BREZHNEV VISIT STILL REMAINING, THE GDR WISHES TO MAIN-  
TAIN SOME PROGRESS IN FRG/GDR RELATIONS.

3. AS A SECOND FACTOR, HE CITED THE POSSIBILITY OF A  
SCHMIDT/HONECKER MEETING. IF THE GDR WANTS SCHMIDT

TO PAY A VISIT TO THE GDR TO MEET WITH HONECKER, AND

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THIS APPEARS TO BE THE GDR DESIRE, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT  
THERE BE A FAVORABLE CLIMATE FOR THE VISIT. THIRD,  
THE GDR WANTS TO KEEP THE SITUATION RELATIVELY CALM  
IN THE GDR, AND THE LOCAL POPULATION, WITH ACCESS TO  
FRG TELEVISION, IS WELL-INFORMED ABOUT THE CURRENT  
STATE OF GDR RELATIONS WITH THE FRG. HE SAID THAT THE  
PRESENT GDR GOVERNMENT IS MORE INCLINED TOWARD A POLICY  
OF CONCILIATION WITH THAN OPPRESSION OF THE POPULATION.  
AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THAT THE GDR GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN  
CONCILIATORY TOWARD THE CHURCHES IN THE GDR. AS A  
FINAL FACTOR, HE CITED THE UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING THE  
BREZHNEV SUCCESSION QUESTION. IN GENERAL, THE  
PRESENT ADMINISTRATION WISHES TO KEEP ALL ITS OPTIONS  
OPEN, ALTHOUGH SOME IN THE GDR WOULD WELCOME A HARD LINE  
AND, FOR THAT REASON, WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE A CDU  
GOVERNMENT IN BONN.

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4. WITH RESPECT TO SPECIFIC SUBJECTS OF NEGOTIATION, HE SAID THAT THOSE WHICH HAD BEEN OR ARE BEING NEGOTIATED ARE OF A TECHNICAL NATURE, E.G. THE MINOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, VETERINARY AGREEMENT, ETC. PROGRESS ON A NUMBER OF OTHER AGREEMENTS (E.G. CULTURAL, LEGAL ASSISTANCE, ETC.) WHICH ARE OF IMPORTANCE TO THE FRG ARE BLOCKED FOR A VARIETY OF POLITICAL REASONS. THE GDR, WHICH HAD AGREED TO COMMENCE NEGOTIATIONS IN 1978 ON THE HAMBURG/BERLIN AUTOBAHN, CONTINUES TO SAY IT IS NOT YET READY TO TALK. BRAEUTIGAM EXPRESSED TO US THE HOPE THE GDR WILL BE READY TO DO SO LATER THIS YEAR. HE CITED THIS AGREEMENT AS ONE OF SPECIAL INTEREST AND BENEFIT TO THE GDR, BOTH FOR FINANCIAL REASONS AND BECAUSE OF THE CONTRIBUTION IT WILL MAKE TO THE GDR TRANSPORTATION NETWORK. HOWEVER, THE GDR GIVES THE IMPRESSION THAT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT YET BEEN COMPLETED. IF THE GDR IS TO INCLUDE THE AUTOBAHN CONSTRUCTION IN ITS NEXT FIVE YEAR PLAN, NEGOTIATIONS NEED TO BE COMPLETED BY THE BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR.

5. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION WHETHER THERE IS SOVIET CONCERN ABOUT FRG/GDR RELATIONS, BRAEUTIGAM SAID THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE A GREAT DEAL OF SOVIET MISTRUST OF WHAT THE GERMANS MIGHT BE UP TO WHEN THEY GET TOGETHER. HE CITED AS AN EXAMPLE SOVIET INTEREST IN AN UNPRECEDENTED GAUS/HONECKER MEETING AT WHICH NO ONE ELSE WAS PRESENT AND TO WHICH THEY WERE NOT PRIVY, ASSUMING THE ROOM WAS NOT BUGGED. THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN HAS SHOWN A RECENT INCREASE IN INTEREST IN MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH THE FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATION CONCERNING MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE WHILE THE PRIOR INTEREST WAS

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MERELY PROTOCOLARY IN NATURE.

STOPH/HONECKER

6. BRAEUTIGAM DISCOUNTED THE WESTERN PRESS REPORTS OF A STOPH/HONECKER STRUGGLE FOR POWER. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HONECKER IS NOT THE DECISIVE FIGURE HE WAS IN 1975 (A YEAR AFTER ASSUMING POWER, DURING WHICH HE HAD A RAPID CLIMB) HIS POSITION DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE UNCERTAIN. THE STYLE OF LEADERSHIP IS STILL COLLEGIAL AND IN THE POLITBUERO THERE MAY BE A CHANGING

MAJORITY ON ANY OF A NUMBER OF ISSUES. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO SINGLE COHESIVE MAJORITY. HE SAID THAT HONECKER HAS BEEN CLOSE TO BREZHNEV FOR SOME TIME, IN ADDITION TO WHICH HIS POLICY HAS BREZHNEV'S APPROVAL. BUT EVEN WHEN BREZHNEV IS NO LONGER ON THE SCENE, HONECKER IS NOT EXPECTED TO FALL. STOPH APPEARS TO BE MORE OF AN EXECUTOR OF POLICY THAN A POLICY MAKER AND IS UNLIKELY TO CHALLENGE HONECKER'S LEADERSHIP.

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R 211759Z MAR 78  
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7. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE REPORTS OF HERMANN VAN BERG'S ARREST AND SUBSEQUENT DENIAL OF SUCH REPORTS, BRAEUTIGAM SAID HE HAD NO FURTHER INFORMATION TO OFFER. HE INDICATED THAT VON BERG'S WHEREABOUTS HAD BEEN UNCERTAIN FOR PERIODS OF TIME AND THAT HE HAD APPARENTLY BEEN ABSENT FROM HIS UNIVERSITY POST, BUT IT WAS UNCLEAR IF HE HAD IN FACT BEEN ARRESTED. IN ANY CASE, HE DOUBTED THAT VON BERG WAS INVOLVED IN A STOPH/HONECKER POWER STRUGGLE.

USE OF WEST GERMAN MARKS IN EAST GERMANY

8. BRAEUTIGAM CITED THE INTERSHOP SYSTEM AS AN EXAMPLE OF HONECKER'S CONCILIATORY POLICY TOWARD THE POPULATION. THE SYSTEM ALSO ABSORBS A GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENTIAL

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HARD CURRENCY AND THE FRG'S ESTIMATE, WHICH IS CONSERVATIVE, IS THAT THE GDR NETS 300 TO 400 MILLION WEST MARKS FROM THE INTERSHOPS. THIS HAS, HOWEVER, LED TO TWO UNWELCOME DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GDR. IT HAS CREATED A TWO-CLASS SYSTEM, WITH THE "PRIVILEGED" CLASS BEING THOSE WITH ACCESS TO DM WEST WHILE THE PARTY FAITHFUL ARE DENIED THE CONTACTS WITH THE WEST WHICH WOULD ENABLE THEM TO OBTAIN HARD CURRENCY. THOSE WITH HARD CURRENCY ARE ABLE TO BUILD HOMES, OBTAIN AUTOMOBILES MUCH SOONER THAN THOSE WHO WAIT TO PURCHASE THEM WITH EAST MARKS, ETC. EVEN MORE UNWELCOME FOR THE GDR LEADERSHIP, THE SYSTEM HAS LED TO A DUAL CURRENCY SYSTEM WHERE DM WEST CIRCULATE AS A SECOND CURRENCY. CITIZENS CAN PROCURE SERVICES (E.G. OF SKILLED TRADESMEN) BY OFFERING DM WEST WHILE SUCH SERVICES ARE OTHERWISE HARD TO OBTAIN.

9. HE SAID THAT THE REGIME HAS THE PRACTICAL MEANS OF ENDING THIS SYSTEM IF IT SO WISHES. LIMITS ON THE AMOUNT OF HARD CURRENCY WHICH CITIZENS CAN HOLD, THE PROHIBITION ON BANK ACCOUNTS IN HARD CURRENCY, ETC. HAVE BEEN ONLY SUSPENDED, NOT REVOKED. SHOULD THE REGIME DECIDE TO TAKE STEPS AGAINST THE HARD CURRENCY SYSTEM, IT COULD GRADUALLY (AND IT WOULD PROBABLY DO SO ONLY GRADUALLY) REINSTITUTE THE RESTRICTIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE, PUNISH THE USE OF HARD CURRENCY IN PRIVATE TRANSACTIONS, ETC.

SOVIET POLICY ON BERLIN

10. ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIETS APPEARED TO BE HARDENING THEIR POLICY ON BERLIN, BRAEUTIGAM SAID IT IS A MATTER OF DEFINITION. HE SAID THAT RECENT SOVIET CONFIDENTIAL

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PROTESTS HAVE REFLECTED A HARSHER TONE AND THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE ALSO BEGUN TO ATTACK IN AREAS, E.G. THE EXTENSION OF FRG LAWS TO BERLIN, WHICH HAVE LONG BEEN IN EXISTENCE RATHER THAN RECENT FRG INITIATIVES IN

BERLIN. HOWEVER, THIS MAY REFLECT NOT SO MUCH A  
HARDENED LINE AS A RETURN TO THAT WHICH THE SOVIETS  
CONSIDER NORMALCY.

11. AS BACKGROUND, HE SAID THAT THE SOVIETS HAD UNTIL  
RECENTLY HOPED TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH  
THE FRG, JUST AS THEY HAD EARLIER SOUGHT TO DO THE SAME  
WITH FRANCE. FOR A PERIOD OF TIME AFTER THE CONCLUSION  
OF THE QA, THIS MAY HAVE APPEARED (TO THE SOVIETS) TO  
BE MOVING FORWARD WITH THE CONCLUSION OF TREATIES,  
FRG BUSINESS INTEREST IN LARGE INVESTMENTS IN THE USSR,  
ETC. HOWEVER, THE BIG STEPS IN TERMS OF BILATERAL  
RELATIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN, THE INTEREST OF THE BUSINESS  
COMMUNITY IN MAJOR INVESTMENTS HAS WANED, AND THE  
SOVIETS HAVE FOUND THAT THE CLOSE FRG IDENTIFICATION  
OF INTEREST WITH THE US IN SUCH AREAS AS DISARMAMENT  
POLICY HAS NOT SLACKENED. HAVING BEEN DISAPPOINTED IN  
THE CREATION OF A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FRG,  
THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO BE GOING IN THE DIRECTION OF A  
POLICY ON BERLIN, AT LEAST FOR THE NEAR TERM, WHICH IS

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NOT TEMPERED BY THE DESIRE TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP. WHILE SUCH A POLICY MAY CREATE TENSIONS AND DIFFICULTIES FOR THE FRG, HE IS NOT OVERLY WORRIED ABOUT IT. THE BEST RESPONSE IS TO CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN THE TIES BETWEEN THE FRG AND BERLIN IN A NORMAL FASHION. HE NOTED, INCIDENTALLY, THAT THE FOREIGN OFFICE MAY TAKE A DIFFERENT (PRESUMABLY LESS RELAXED) VIEW ABOUT THE SOVIET GOALS AND THEIR EFFECT ON BERLIN AND THE FRG.

12. HE SAID THAT THE BERLIN/EC RELATIONSHIP MAY CREATE MORE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS, HOWEVER. THE SOVIETS APPEAR GENUINELY CONCERNED THAT THE INCLUSION OF BERLIN IN THE PROCESS OF EUROPEAN POLITICAL INTEGRATION WILL EFFECT A CHANGE WHICH THREATENS SOVIET INTERESTS. ALTHOUGH ONE CAN REPLY TO THE SOVIETS THAT THE PROCESS

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OF POLITICAL INTEGRATION IS MOVING SLOWLY IF AT ALL, THE SOVIET CONCERN APPEARS TO BE THAT THE SWITCH HAS BEEN TURNED EVEN THOUGH THE TRAIN IS NOT MOVING.

13. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE CDU WOULD TAKE A DIFFERENT LINE, IF IT WERE IN POWER, HE SAID THAT THE DIFFERENCE WOULD BE PRIMARILY IN TONE AND ANY REAL CHANGES WOULD PROBABLY BE SHORT-LIVED. THE CDU WOULD SOON REALIZE THAT BERLIN POLICY IS DETERMINED BY INDIVIDUAL DECISIONS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES AND IMPLIED THAT THE BERLIN POLICY OF A CDU GOVERNMENT WOULD BE DETERMINED BY THE SAME REALITIES AS ARE THOSE OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT.

BONN GROUP COORDINATION

14. EMBOFF NOTED THE GREATLY-IMPROVED COORDINATION IN THE BONN GROUP SINCE LAST SUMMER, AT WHICH TIME THERE WERE A SERIES OF ALLIED/FRG DIFFERENCES, AND ATTRIBUTED THIS TO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE FRG BONN GROUP REP VON BRAUNMUEHL. HE ALSO EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR THE FRG WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO THE ALLIES EVEN WHERE THEIR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ARE NOT AFFECTED.

15. BRAEUTIGAM WELCOMED THESE REMARKS AND SAID THAT THE FRG WAS DESIROUS THAT THE BONN GROUP CONSULTATIONS BE AS FREE OF FRICTION AS POSSIBLE. HE SAID THAT THE FRG WAS ATTEMPTING TO AVOID THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH RESULTED FROM HURRIED AND INADEQUATE CONSULTATIONS, SUCH AS OCCURRED IN THE CASE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE



FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY IN BERLIN, AND CITED THE  
FRG ATTEMPTS TO CONSULT FULLY ON THE SOLUTION TO THE  
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NATIONALSTIFTUNG PROBLEM AS AN EXAMPLE. SHOULD WE AT  
ANY TIME FEEL THAT THINGS WERE NOT MOVING AS SMOOTHLY  
AS THEY SHOULD, OR THAT THERE WAS MORE WE WANTED TO  
KNOW AND OF WHICH WE WERE NOT BEING INFORMED, WE SHOULD  
CONTACT HIM AND HE WOULD ENSURE THAT WE WERE PROVIDED  
WITH ANYTHING WE SOUGHT. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT HE DID  
NOT FORESEE THIS BECOMING NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE  
EXCELLENT COOPERATION WE NOW ENJOY.

16. BRAEUTIGAM SAID THAT HE DID NOT REGARD THE BONN  
GROUP AS A MECHANISM FOR MERELY FORMAL CONSULTATIONS,  
WITH EACH REPRESENTATIVE REPORTING ON HIS INSTRUCTIONS  
FROM CAPITALS, BUT SAID THAT IT SHOULD ALSO SERVE AS  
A SOUNDING BOARD FOR INFORMAL EXCHANGES OF VIEW ON A  
PERSONAL BASIS. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY USEFUL TO THE  
FRG WHEN THE ALLIED REPS EXPRESSED MISGIVINGS ABOUT A  
GIVEN COURSE THE FRG MIGHT BE CONSIDERING WITH  
RESPECT TO BERLIN, AND PROVIDED THE FRG WITH AN OPPOR-  
TUNITY TO RECONSIDER ITS PLANS WITHOUT THE MATTER  
BECOMING A FORMAL BILATERAL ISSUE.

17. SPEAKING OF BONN GROUP CONSIDERATION OF THE PRO-  
POSED GDR/US CONSULAR CONVENTION, BRAEUTIGAM SAID THAT  
THIS WAS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR THE FRG.  
IT IS POLITICALLY HIGHLY SENSITIVE AS AN INTERNAL MATTER  
AND, WHILE THE FRG IS NOT SEEKING TO RESTRICT US  
FLEXIBILITY, IT IS INTENSELY INTERESTED IN THE NEGOTIA-  
TIONS.  
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## Message Attributes

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